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### 5. The Song of David in 2 Samuel 22

Labuschagne, C.J.

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## 5. The Song of David in 2 Samuel 22— Logotechnical Analysis

### Guidelines

- Please read the [General Introduction](#) and the Introduction to the [Embedded Poetry](#).
- For common features found in the numerical analysis charts, see the "[Key to the charts](#)".

### The Literary Context of the Song of David in 2 Samuel 22

- The Song of victory presented as sung by David “to YHWH on the day when YHWH delivered him from the power of all his enemies and from the power of Saul” is the poetic culmination of the story of the rise of David. In the Book(s) of Samuel it constitutes the counterpart of the Song of Hannah with which it shares similar features. The Song of Hannah about her elevation at the beginning, and the Song of David about his elevation and his deliverance from his enemies at the end frame the entire story.

The two songs respectively comment on the move towards the monarchy and its ultimate firm establishment. Both open with the expression of confidence and the joy over deliverance – compare 1 Sam. 2:1 with 2 Sam. 22:2-7. Note also the pairing of the divine names YHWH and Elyon and God’s ‘thundering from the heavens’ in 1 Sam. 2:10 and 2 Sam. 22:14. Both songs end with a clear reference to the establishment of the Davidic kingship: in 1 Sam. 2:10b it is said “May he (YHWH) endow *his king* with strength and raise high the horn of *his anointed*”, and in 2 Sam. 22:51 YHWH is called “the one who does great acts of salvation for *his king*, and shows steadfast love to *his anointed*”. In fact, the last verse in the Song of David (v. 51) expresses the fulfilment of the wish in the last verse of Hannah’s prayer.

Moreover, both songs explicitly refer to YHWH’s incomparability and uniqueness (1 Sam. 2:2 and 2 Sam 22:32). This also links them with the Song at the Reed Sea (Exod.15:10) and the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:39). Such portrayals presenting YHWH as supreme, displaying his anger as he rides to battle (2 Sam. 22:8-16), connects the Song of David to the description of YHWH going to battle in the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5:4-5).

The placing of the Song of David at this point in the Deuteronomistic History clearly resembles the positioning of the Song of Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy. The similarity is highlighted by the fact that the Song of David is followed by his “Last Words” (2 Samuel 23:1-7) in the same way as the Song of Moses is followed by his last words, the Blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33). All this strongly suggests a unity of concept.

In its immediate context the Song looks back specifically on David’s victories and follows well after the decision of his officers that “he should never again go out with them to war, for fear that the *lamp* of Israel might be extinguished” in 21:17. The reference to “the lamp of Israel” may well prelude David’s words in 22:29 “You, YHWH, are my *lamp*”. It is certainly not a matter of coincidence, for there are more allusions in the Song to events or situations in the preceding story. At the very beginning of the Song (vs. 2-3) the author piles up no less than ten key-words to express YHWH’s power and protection: my Stronghold, my Fortress, my Champion, my God, my Rock, my Shield, the Horn of my salvation, my Strong Tower, my Refuge, my Deliverer who saves me from violence. One does not need any special imagination to come to the conclusion that all key-words refer to what David has experienced in his life as described in the story of his rise to power.

The metaphor of the hostile waters denoting the powers associated with death and *Sheol* is of course a widely used image in the book of Psalms, but here it specifically alludes to the perilous situations in which David found himself in his struggle with Saul. The word *sheol* in v. 6a may therefore be regarded as a subtle allusion to Saul, in much the same way as *sheol* in the Song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:6).

Therefore, there is no reason to doubt that the Song of David was specifically composed to suit its place as the culmination in the story of David's rise to power. Neither is there any evidence for the prevalent supposition that it was transferred from a previous *Sitz im Leben* and inserted here as an inset hymn. In my view, the Song was composed along with its narrative context and integral to the story of the rise of David into which it was embedded as its poetic high point.

In the wider context of the Deuteronomistic History it was composed as the fifth and last poetic stepping-stone after the Song at the Reed Sea, the Song of Moses, the Song of Deborah, and the Song of Hannah, as the grand finale of the Embedded Hymns in the Deuteronomistic History. See the Literary Context of the [Song of Hannah](#), and the Introduction to the [Embedded Poetry](#).

This settles, in my opinion, the problem of the relationship between 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 18: the latter psalm is nothing but a copy of the Song of David, which had a transmission history of its own until it was incorporated into the Psalter as a key-poem in the First Book of Psalms. Compare the Introduction to [Book I](#) of the Psalter.

## Special features of 2 Samuel 22:2b-51

In terms of numerical composition 2 Samuel 22 is far superior to Psalm 18 and certainly not in need of any emendation.<sup>1</sup> This is demonstrated by the opening verses with **17** words in the heading and introduction to the Song (vs. 1-2a), with **17** words in the first strophe (vs. 2b-3) and with **17** words concluding the Song. Additional evidence is the particularly beautiful centre of the Song: the middle word in [v. 26b](#) is flanked by **182 (7 x 26)** words on either side:  $365 = 182 + 1 + 182$ . Moreover, the **7**-word meaningful centre of the two middle cola, [v. 26](#) ( $110 = 54 + 2 + 54$ ) may be regarded as expressing the gist of the Song:

*“With the loyal you show yourself loyal; with the blameless you show yourself blameless.”*

And finally, the compositional formula of the Song including the heading and introductory formula,  $382 = 187a + 195b$ , has **187** words before *atnach*, which is a multiple of the divine name number **17 (11 x 17)**. Any emendation would disturb such numerical features.

Psalm 18 lacks most of these significant features. The superiority of 2 Samuel 22 is also demonstrated by the state of the text. The text of 2 Samuel 22 can stand as it is in MT, but the text of Psalm 18 is in need of at least one emendation. See [Psalm 18](#).

It is important to keep in mind that we should be careful not to use the text of Psalm 18 to 'restore' 2 Samuel 22 (e.g., in v. 36, where Psalm 18 has an extra colon), or vice versa. The two texts must be studied with due respect for the two traditions they represent. The safest way is to be conservative in textual criticism.

## Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Labuschagne: 2-3 || 4-6, 7-9, 10-13, 14-16 || 17-20, 21-25, 26-30 || 31-35, 36-39, 40-43, 44-46 || 47-49, 50-51 (5 cantos, **14** strophes, with **52** verselines and 110 cola, with due regard for the conspicuous switches in the way God is referred to: vs. 3||4, 25||26, 30||31, 35||36, and 46||47. The transition between 49a||49b within v. Strophe 13 (vs. 47-49) functions as a device for drawing special attention to what is said in v. 49b. See Observation 2 below.
- Van der Lugt: 2-3 || 4-6, 7-9, 10-13, 14-16 || 17-20, 21-24, 25-28, 29-31 || 32-35, 36-39, 40-43, 44-46 || 47-49, 50-51 (5 cantos, 15 strophes, **52** verselines and 110 cola).
- Fokkelman: 2-4, 5-6, 7 || 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 16 || 17-18, 19-20 || 21-23, 24-25, 26-27, 28-30, 31 || 32-33, 34-35, 36-37, 38-39, 40-41, 42-43, 44-46 || 47-49, 50-51 (3 sections, 6 stanzas, 24 strophes with 53 verselines and 110 cola), taking v. 31c as a separate verseline. In his analysis of Psalm 18, in his book *Psalms in Form*, he rightly considers v. 31 as the third colon of its tricolonic verseline.
- For an overview of other divisions of the text, see Van der Lugt, *CAS*, Psalm 18, § 6.

<sup>1</sup> F. Stolz, *Das erste und zweite Buch Samuel* (Zürcher Bibelkommentare), Zürich 1981, p.287, claims “daß Ps. 18 eher weniger textliche Schwierigkeiten aufweist als 2.Sam.22”.

## Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the *atnach*.
- Column **c**: words spoken *to* God; **d**: words spoken *about* God.
- The numbering of the **verselines** is to be found to the right of the Hebrew text.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	וַיְדַבֵּר דָּוִד לַיהוָה אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאתָּ בְּיוֹם הַצִּיל יְהוָה אֶת־ מִכָּפָּה כָּל־אֵיבָיו וּמִכָּפָּה שְׂאוֹל:	7 4 5	7  5	 4 5		
2a	וַיֹּאמֶר Introductory formula	1	= 1	+ 0		
	Heading and introduction, v. 1 + 2a	17	= 8	+ 9		
2b	*Note that יְהוָה סָלַעַי וּמִצְדָּתִי וּמִפְלִטֵי־לִי:	1	5	0	5*	5
3	v. 2b is <i>after</i> atnach! אֱלֹהֵי צוּרֵי אַחֲסֵת־בֹּרֵא מִגְנִי וְקֶרֶן יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבִי וּמִגֹּסֵי מִשְׁעֵי מִחֲמֹס תִּשְׁעֵנִי:	4 4 4	4  4	 4 4	4 4 4	0 0 0
	Canto I, Prelude Strophe 1 Total, v. 2b-3	17	= 4	+ 13	= 17	+ 0
4	מִהָלָל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וּמֵאֵיבֵי אֲנִשֶּׁע:	3 2	3  2	  2		3 2
	Total, v. 4	5	= 3	+ 2	= 0	+ 5
5	כִּי אֶפְפָּנִי מִשְׁבָּרֵי־מָוֶת נִחַלִּי בְלִיעַל וּבַעֲתָנִי:	4 3	4  3	  3		4 3
	Total, v. 5	7	= 4	+ 3	= 0	+ 7
6	חֲבִלִּי שְׂאוֹל סִבְנִי קֶדְמָנִי מִקְשֵׁי־מָוֶת:	5 3	3  3	  3		3 3
	Total, v. 6	6	= 3	+ 3	= 0	+ 6
	Strophe 2 Total, v. 4-6	18	= 10	+ 8	= 0	+ 18
7	בְּצַר־לִי אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֵי אֶקְרָא וַיִּשְׁמַע מִדִּיכָלוּ קוֹלִי וַיִּשְׁעָתִי בְּאֲזָנָיו:	6 3 7 2	4 3 3 2	 3  3		4 3 3 2
	Total, v. 7	12	= 7	+ 5	= 0	+ 12
	Total, v. 4-7	30	= 17	+ 13	= 0	+ 30
	Total, vs. 2b-7	47	= 21	+ 26	= 17	+ 30
8	וַיִּתְנַשֵּׁשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ מוֹסְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְגָּזוּ וַיִּתְנַשֵּׁשׁוּ כִּי־חָרָה לֹא:	8 3 4	3 3 4	 3  4		3 3 4
	Total, v. 8	10	= 6	+ 4	= 0	+ 10
9	עָלָה עֵשֶׂן בְּאָפוֹ וְאֵשׁ מִפִּי תֹאכֵל נִחַלִּים בָּעֵרּוּ מִמֶּנּוּ:	9 3 3	3 3 3	 3  3		3 3 3
	Total, v. 9	9	= 6	+ 3	= 0	+ 9
	Strophe 3 Total, v. 7-9	31	= 19	+ 12	= 0	+ 31

10	וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיִּרְדָּא <sup>^</sup> וַעֲרַפֵּל תַּחַת רִגְלָיו: Total, v. 10	10	3	3	3	3
11	וַיִּרְכַּב עַל־כְּרוֹב וַיַּעֲרֶא <sup>^</sup> וַיֵּרָא עַל־כְּנָפֵי־רוּחַ: Total, v. 11	11	4	4	4	4
12	וַיָּשֶׁת חֶשֶׁד סְבִיבָתָיו סָבוֹת <sup>^</sup> חֲשֶׁר־ת־מִים עָבִי שְׁחָקִים: Total, v. 12	12	4	4	4	4
13	מִנְּהָ נָגְדָא <sup>^</sup> בָּעֲרוּ נִחְלִי־אֵשׁ: Total, v. 13	13	2	2	2	2
Strophe 4			Total, v. 10-13		27 = 13 + 14 = 0 + 27	
14	יִרְעֵם מִן־שָׁמַיִם יְהוָה <sup>^</sup> וַעֲלִיזוּן יִתֵּן קוֹלוֹ: Total, v. 14	14	4	4	4	4
			Total, v. 10-14		34 = 17 + 17 = 0 + 34	
15	וַיִּשְׁלַח חֲצִים וַיַּפִּיצֵם <sup>^</sup> בָּרֶק וַיַּהֲם: Total, v. 15	15	3	3	3	3
16	וַיֵּרָאוּ אַפְקֵי יָם <sup>^</sup> וַיִּגְלוּ מִסְדּוֹת תְּבִלָּא <sup>^</sup> בְּנֻעֶרֶת יְהוָה <sup>^</sup> מִנְּשֹׁמֶת רוּחַ אָפוּ: Total, v. 16	16	3	3	3	3
Strophe 5			Total, v. 14-16		23 = 13 + 10 = 0 + 23	
Canto II			Total, v. 4-16		99 = 55 + 44 = 0 + 99	
			Total, v. 2b-16		116 = 59 + 57 = 17 + 99	
17	וַיִּשְׁלַח מִמָּרוֹם יִקְחֵנִי <sup>^</sup> יִמְשְׁנִי מִמִּים רַבִּים: Total, v. 17	18	3	3	3	3
18	יִצִּילֵנִי מֵאִיְבֵי עֲזִי <sup>^</sup> מִשְׁנֹאֵי כִי אֶמְצֹו מִמֶּנִּי: Total, v. 18	19	3	3	3	3
19	יִקְדָּמֵנִי בַיּוֹם אִידִי <sup>^</sup> וַיְהִי יְהוָה מִשְׁעֵן לִי: Total, v. 19	20	3	3	3	3
20	וַיֵּצֵא לְמִרְחָב אֹתִי <sup>^</sup> יִחְלָצֵנִי כִי־חָפֵץ בִּי: Total, v. 20	21	3	3	3	3
Strophe 6			Total, v. 17-20		27 = 12 + 15 = 0 + 27	

21	וְנִמְלֵנִי יְהוָה כְּצִדְקָתִי <sup>^</sup> כְּבֹר יְדֵי יוֹשִׁיב לִי: Total, v. 21 Total, v. 17-21	22	3	3	3	4	4	7 = 3 + 4 = 0 + 7	34 = 15 + 19 = 0 + 34
22	כִּי שְׁמִרְתִּי דָרְכֵי יְהוָה <sup>^</sup> וְלֹא רָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאַלְהֵי: Total, v. 22	23	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7	
23	כִּי כָל־מִשְׁפָּטָיו לִנְגִדִּי <sup>^</sup> וְחִקְתִּיו לֹא־אֲסוּר מִמֶּנָּה: Total, v. 23	24	4	4	4	4	4	8 = 4 + 4 = 0 + 8	
24	וְאַהֲבִיהַ תָּמִים לוֹ <sup>^</sup> וְאַשְׁתַּמְרָה מֵעוֹנֵי: Total, v. 24	25	3	3	3	2	2	5 = 3 + 2 = 0 + 5	
25	וַיָּשֶׁב יְהוָה לִי כְּצִדְקָתִי <sup>^</sup> כְּבָרִי לִנְגִד עֵינָיו: Total, v. 25	26	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7	34 = 18 + 16 = 0 + 34
Strophe 7		Total, v. 21-25	34	18	16	0	34		
26	Middle cola: עִם־חֲסִיד תִּתְחַסֵּד <sup>^</sup> 110 = 54 + 2 + 54 : עִם־נִבְּוֹר תָּמִים תִּתְחַסֵּד <sup>^</sup> Middle word: 365=182+1+182 Total, v. 26	27	3	3	3	4	4	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0	
27	54 (2x27) 182 (7x26) עִם־נִבְּוֹר תִּתְחַסֵּד <sup>^</sup> וְעִם־עֶקֶשׁ תִּתְפַּל: Total, v. 27	28	3	3	3	3	3	6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0	
28	וְאַתָּ־עַם עֲנִי תוֹשִׁיעַ <sup>^</sup> וְעֵינֶיךָ עַל־רָמִים תִּשְׁפִּיל: Total, v. 28	29	4	4	4	4	4	8 = 4 + 4 = 8 + 0	
29	כִּי־אַתָּה גִּירֵי יְהוָה <sup>^</sup> וַיִּתֶּנָּה יְגִיָּה חֲשָׁכִי: Total, v. 29	30	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0	
30	כִּי בָכָה אֲרוּץ גְּדוּדִי <sup>^</sup> בְּאַלְהֵי אֲדָלָג־שׁוּר: Total, v. 30	31	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0	35 = 18 + 17 = 35 + 0
Strophe 8		Total, v. 26-30	35	18	17	35	0		
31	הָאֵל תָּמִים דָּרְכוֹ <sup>^</sup> אָמַרְתָּ יְהוָה צְרוּפָה מִגֵּן הוּא לְכָל תַּחֲסִים בּוֹ: Total, v. 31	32	3	3	3	5	5	11 = 3 + 8 = 0 + 11	
32	כִּי מִי־אֵל מִבְּלָעַדִּי יְהוָה <sup>^</sup> וּמִי צוּר מִבְּלָעַדִּי אֱלֹהֵינוּ: Total, v. 32	33	5	5	5	4	4	9 = 5 + 4 = 0 + 9	
33	הָאֵל מְעוּזִי חֵילִי <sup>^</sup> וַיִּתֶּר תָּמִים דָּרְכֵי: Total, v. 33	34	3	3	3	3	3	6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6	
34	מִשְׁנֵה רִגְלִי כְּאַיְלוֹתִי <sup>^</sup> וְעַל בָּמוֹתַי יַעֲמִדֵנִי: Total, v. 34	35	3	3	3	3	3		

	Total, v. 34		6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6
35	מִלְמַד יָדֵי לְמַלְחָמָה <sup>^</sup> 36	3	3
	וְנַחַת קִשְׁת־נְחוּשָׁה זָרַעְתִּי:	4	4
	Total, v. 35	7 = 3 + 4 = 0 + 7	
	Strophe 9 Total, v. 31-35	39 = 17 + 22 = 0 + 39	
36	וַתִּתֶּן-לִי מִגֵּן יִשְׁעָהּ <sup>^</sup> 37	4	4
	וַעֲנֶתְךָ תִּרְבְּנִי:	2	2
	Total, v. 36	6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0	
37	תִּרְחִיב צַעְדֵי תַּחְתָּנִי <sup>^</sup> 38	3	3
	וְלֹא מַעֲדוּ קַרְסָלִי:	3	3
	Total, v. 37	6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0	
38	אֲרֹדְפָה אִיבֵי וְאַשְׁמִידֵם <sup>^</sup> 39	3	3
	וְלֹא אָשׁוּב עַד-כָּלֹתָם:	4	4
	Total, v. 38	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0	
39	* See note וְאַכְלֵם וְאַמְחָצֵם <sup>^</sup> וְלֹא יִקְוּמוּן <sup>^</sup> 40	4	4
	וַיִּפְּלוּ תַּחַת רַגְלִי:	3	3
	Total, v. 39	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0	
	Strophe 10 Total, v. 36-39	26 = 14 + 12 = 26 + 0	
40	וַתִּזְרְנִי חֵיל לְמַלְחָמָה <sup>^</sup> 41	3	3
	תִּכְרִיעַ קָמִי תַּחְתָּנִי:	3	3
	Total, v. 40	6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0	
	Total, v. 36-40	32 = 17 + 15 = 32 + 0	
	Total, v. 17-40	167 = 82 + 85 = 67 + 100	
41	וְאַיִבֵי תַּתָּה לִי עָרְפָּה <sup>^</sup> 42	4	4
	מִשְׁנָאִי וְאַצְמִיתָם:	2	2
	Total, v. 41	6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0	
	Total, v. 36-41	38 = 21 + 17 = 38 + 0	
42	יִשְׁעוּ וְאִין מוֹשִׁיעַ <sup>^</sup> 43	3	3
	אֶל-יְהוָה וְלֹא עָנָם:	4	4
	Total, v. 42	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0	
43	וְאַשְׁחָקֵם כַּעֲפַר-אַרְצָן <sup>^</sup> 44	3	3
	כְּטִיט-חוּצוֹת אֲדָקֵם אֲרַקֵּם:	4	4
	Total, v. 43	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0	
	Strophe 11 Total, v. 40-43	26 = 13 + 13 = 26 + 0	
	Total, v. 17-43	187 = 91 + 96 = 87 + 100	
44	וַתִּפְּלֹטֵנִי מִרִיבֵי עַמִּי <sup>^</sup> 45	3	3
	תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ גּוֹיִם	3	3
	עִם לֹא-יִדְעֵתִי יַעֲבֹדֵנִי:	4	4
	Total, v. 44	10 = 3 + 7 = 10 + 0	
45	בְּנִי נִכְרַ וַתִּכְחָשׁוּ-לִי <sup>^</sup> 46	4	4
	לְשִׁמוֹעַ אֶזֶן יִשְׁמְעוּ לִי:	4	4
	Total, v. 45	8 = 4 + 4 = 8 + 0	
46	בְּנִי נִכְרַ יִבְלֹה <sup>^</sup> 47	3	3
	וַיַּחֲגְרוּ מִמִּסְגְּרוֹתָם:	2	2
	Total, v. 46	5 = 3 + 2 = 5 + 0	
	Strophe 12 Total, v. 44-46	23 = 10 + 13 = 23 + 0	
	Canto IV Total, v. 31-46	114 = 54 + 60 = 61 + 53	



47	חִי־יְהוָה וּבְרוּךְ צוּרֵי־	48	4	4	4
	וְיָרֶם אֱלֹהֵי צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל:		4	4	4
	Total, v. 47		8	= 4 + 4	= 0 + 8
48	הָאֵל הַנֶּתִּן נִקְמַת לֵי־	49	4	4	4
	וּמוֹרִיד עָמִים תַּחְתָּנִי:		3	3	3
	Total, v. 48		7	= 4 + 3	= 0 + 7
49	וּמוֹצִיאֵי מַאֲכָלִי	50	2	2	2
	וּמַקְמֵי תְרוּמָמִנִי		2	2	2
	מֵאִשׁ חֲמָסִים תַּצִּילֵנִי:		3	3	3
	Total, v. 49		7	= 2 + 5	= 5 + 2
	<b>Strophe 13 Total, v. 47-49</b>		<b>22</b>	= 10 + 12	= 5 + 17
50	עַל־כֵּן אוֹדֶה יְהוָה בְּנוֹיָם־	51	5	5	5
	וּלְשִׁמְךָ אֶזְמָר:		2	2	2
	Total, v. 50		7	= 5 + 2	= 7 + 0
	Total, v. 36-43		<b>52</b>	= 27 + 25	= 38 + 14
	Total, v. 44-50		<b>52</b>	= 25 + 27	= 35 + 17
	Numerical chiasmus, v. 36-50		<b>104</b>	= 52 + 52	= 73 + 31
51	<b>Coda</b> מְגִדִּיל * יְשׁוּעוֹת מַלְכוּ־	52	3	3	3
	* See below וַעֲשֶׂה־חֶסֶד לְמַשִּׁיחוֹ		3	3	3
	לְדוֹד וּלְזֶרְעוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם:		4	4	4
	<b>Coda Total, v. 51</b>		<b>10</b>	= 3 + 7	= 0 + 10
	<b>Strophe 14 Total, v. 50-51</b>		<b>17</b>	= 8 + 9	= 7 + 10
	<b>Canto V Total, v. 47-51</b>		<b>39</b>	= 18 + 21	= 12 + 27
	Total, v. 31-51		<b>153</b>	= 72 + 81	= 73 + 80
	Total, v. 2b-51		<b>365</b>	= 179 + 186	= 139 + 226
	With the heading and וַיֹּאמֶר, v. 1-51		<b>382</b>	= 187 + 195	

\* V. 39a: Deleting this word (see e.g., Fokkelman, p. 334, note 7) would give a most tempting total of **364** words (**14x26**), but would wreak havoc with the **26** words in vs. 36-39, the **187** (11 x 17) words in vs. 17-43, and the carefully designed numerical structure of vs. 36-50 with their **104** (4x26) words divided into **52** before and **52** after *atnach*, as well as the significant centre of the Song in v. 26 – see below.

\* V. 51a: Read with MT's Ketib מְגִדִּיל, 'the one who makes great the victories of his king'.

## Observations

- The arithmetic centre in terms of the 365 words of the Song is the word תָּמִים, 'blameless', in v. 26b, with **182** (7 x 26) words on either side: 365 = **182** + 1 + **182**.

The pivotal word falls within the 2 middle cola in v. 26: 110 = **54** + **2** + **54**. These 7 words of the two pivotal cola constitute a very meaningful centre, which has certainly been consciously designed, for it is an eloquent expression of the gist of the poem:

עַם־חֶסֶד תִּתְחַסֵּד ^ עַם־נֹכַח תִּתָּמֵם

*With the loyal you show yourself loyal; with the blameless you show yourself blameless.*

The number **54** is a multiple of **27** and underlines the deliberate use of **27** in Strophes 4 and 6 as the numerical value of the key-root חֶסֶד, 'loyal', in v. 26, which is the 27<sup>th</sup> verseline.

- The words spoken *to* God and the words spoken *about* him are in accordance with Psalm 18, except v. 16, where Ps. 18:16c-d is spoken *to* God. This brings us to the strophic structure of the text, which is, in my opinion, to a great extent determined by the direction of address: the transition from words directly spoken *to* God (Column c) to words spoken *about* him (Column d). Therefore, the transitions should seriously be taken into account when we try to identify the structure of the text. They are to be found between vs. 3||4, 25||26, 30||31, 35||36, 46||47, (and 49a||49b). The transition within v. 49 is an



exception: it clearly functions as a device for drawing special attention, as in Ps. 23,4. On the basis of its content, [v. 51](#) may be regarded as a coda.

See in the [General Introduction](#), “The use of a coda as a device for conclusion”.

In this respect it is significant that the main body of the Song between the Prelude and the Coda consists of **338** (13x**26**) words: **17** (Prelude) + **338** + **10** (Coda) = 382.

This is how the text of the Song is organized in terms of its cantos and strophes:

<a href="#">Strophe 1 (2-3)</a>	<a href="#">Spoken to God: affirmation of trust in YHWH as a refuge.</a>
<a href="#">Strophe 2 (4-6)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: praise to YHWH for deliverance from enemies.
<a href="#">Strophe 3 (7-9)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: YHWH's anger was evident on the earth.
<a href="#">Strophe 4 (10-13)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: YHWH displayed his power in nature.
<a href="#">Strophe 5 (14-16)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: he thundered from heaven and shot arrows.
<a href="#">Strophe 6 (17-20)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: reaching from on high, YHWH delivered me.
<a href="#">Strophe 7 (21-25)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: he treated me according to my righteousness.
<a href="#">Strophe 8 (26-30)</a>	<a href="#">Spoken to God: YHWH, you reward the just with your loyalty.</a>
<a href="#">Strophe 9 (31-35)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: YHWH is my help in times of war.
<a href="#">Strophe 10 (36-39)</a>	<a href="#">Spoken to God: your help made me prevail over my enemies.</a>
<a href="#">Strophe 11 (40-43)</a>	<a href="#">Spoken to God: you helped me to destroy my assailants.</a>
<a href="#">Strophe 12 (44-46)</a>	<a href="#">Spoken to God: you delivered me from strife among the nations.</a>
<a href="#">Strophe 13 (47-49)</a>	Spoken <i>about</i> God: I praise YHWH for his steadfast love.
<a href="#">Strophe 14 (50-51)</a>	<a href="#">Spoken to God: for this I will extol you among the nations.</a>

### 3. The two divine name numbers and their multiples figure many times in 2 Samuel 22:

vs. 1-2a	<b>17</b> words in total
vs. 2b-3	<b>17</b> words in total
vs. 4-7	<b>17</b> words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 2b-7	<b>26</b> words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 10-14	<b>34</b> words in total, with <b>17</b> before and <b>17</b> after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 10-16	<b>26</b> words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 17-21	<b>34</b> (2 X <b>17</b> ) words in total
vs. 21-25	<b>34</b> (2 x <b>17</b> ) words in total
vs. 4-25	<b>85</b> (5 x <b>17</b> ) words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 26-30	<b>17</b> words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 31-35	<b>17</b> words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 36-39	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 36-40	<b>17</b> words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 17-40	<b>85</b> (5 x <b>17</b> ) words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 36-41	<b>17</b> words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 40-43	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 36-43	<b>52</b> (2 x <b>26</b> ) words in total
vs. 17-43	<b>187</b> (11 x <b>17</b> ) words in total
vs. 32-46	<b>51</b> (3 x <b>17</b> ) words before and <b>52</b> (2 x <b>26</b> ) after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 44-50	<b>52</b> (2 x <b>26</b> ) words in total
vs. 36-50	<b>104</b> (4 x <b>26</b> ) words in total, with <b>52</b> before and <b>52</b> after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 50-51	<b>17</b> words in total
vs. 31-51	<b>153</b> (9 x <b>17</b> ) words in total.
vs. 1-51	<b>187</b> (11 x <b>17</b> ) words before <i>atnach</i> .

See now also the overview of the other intriguing numerical features of the Song of David on page 17 in my analysis of the book of [1 Samuel](#).

### 4. The name יהוה occurs 18 times (16x in the poem and 2x in the heading); in Psalm 18 there are 19 occurrences (16 in the poem and 3 in the heading).

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Dr. C.J. Labuschagne  
Brinkhorst 44  
9751 AT Haren (Gron)  
The Netherlands  
[labuschagne.cj@gmail.com](mailto:labuschagne.cj@gmail.com)

Senior Lecturer in Semitic Languages (retired),  
University of Pretoria, South Africa  
and  
Professor of Old Testament (retired),  
University of Groningen, The Netherlands